The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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JESUS LIVES.

Jesus lives! no longer now
Can thy terrors, Death, appal me.
Jesus lives; by this I know
From the grave He will recall me.
Brighter scenes at death commence;—
This shall be my confidence.

Jesus lives! who now despairs
Spurns the Word which God hath spoken.
Grace to all that Word declares,—
Grace whereby sin's yoke is broken.
Christ rejects not penitence;—
This shall be my confidence.

Jesus lives! for me He died;
Hence will I, to Jesus living,
Pure in heart and act abide,
Praise to Him and glory giving.
Freely God doth aid dispense;—
This shall be my confidence.

Jesus lives! my heart knows well
Naught from me His love shall sever,—
Life nor death, nor powers of hell
Part me now from Christ forever.
God will be a sure defence;—
This shall be my confidence.

Jesus lives! henceforth is death
Entrance-gate of life immortal.
This shall calm my trembling breath
When I pass its gloomy portal.
Faith shall cry, as fails each sense,—
Lord, Thou art my confidence!

—*C. F. Gellert.*
(*Translated by Frances E. Cox.*)

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

"Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life."—JOHN xi. 23–26.
"If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith also vain."—1 COR. xv. 14.

In the first of these passages Martha speaks of the resurrection as something future: Jesus speaks of it as something present. To her it was the return to life of the body which had been laid in the grave: to Jesus it was the ascent of the soul to God, which can take place now, and over which death has no power. "He who believeth in me"—that is, who has my inspiration in his soul—"shall never die." To him death is nothing. He cannot come back to life, because he has never ceased to live. He cannot come up out of the grave, for he has never gone down into the grave. He rises out of the bodily and earthly life into a higher life. That is the resurrection.

It is a little strange that the Christian Church should so often have preferred Martha's view of the resurrection to that of Jesus. The Church has usually taught that the resurrection is a coming back to the bodily life, a rising out of the grave at some future time. This contradicts the distinct declaration of Jesus that there is no death to those who have his faith, and therefore no coming back from death. Yet Christians speak habitually of a general resurrection at the last day, when the graves shall be opened and shall give up their dead. The reason of this relapse into Naturalism is the difficulty of apprehending spiritual facts and laws. There is always this tendency to take an outward, material, and literal view of spirit-

ual facts; for this makes them seem more real and palpable. The New Testament, indeed, speaks of the resurrection, or rising up, of the body; that is, of a bodily ascent into higher conditions. But this was changed afterward into a resurrection "of the flesh," though the apostle distinctly says that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The apostle also speaks of a present resurrection, and says, "If ye, then, be risen in Christ, seek those things that are above"; and, again, "Ye are risen with Christ through faith." So he teaches, just as his Master had taught, that resurrection is an ascent into a higher state of soul and body.

The essential fact of the resurrection, therefore, according to Christ and Paul, is not the rising from the grave, or a visible, bodily return to life, but the ascent of the spirit into the spiritual realm. The essential fact in the resurrection of Jesus was this: that he was not dead; that he did not die; that death had no dominion over him; that he had gone up into a superior world, and yet was able to come to his friends below, to teach them, to influence them, and be with them always to the end of the age. The questions of *how* he rose, with what body he came, in what way he showed himself,—these were all secondary and unessential. It was enough that the disciples saw him, knew him to be alive, knew that he was not defeated, that he was coming as the Messiah to establish his kingdom. This was the all-important conviction which gave new life to their souls.

In this sense, especially, is the resurrection of Jesus a great and vital truth of Christianity, which must never be relinquished. It is impossible for us now to discover, and therefore needless for us to ask, the details of the great event. The accounts are too confused and contradictory. All that the disciples were really able to say with certainty was: "The Lord has risen: we have seen him. It is not his ghost: it is himself." A veil of mystery hangs between us and this transaction. Did Christ rise in the same body, to be afterward changed into the spiritual body? or did his spiritual body appear like his natural body? We cannot tell. Paul, who lays such immense stress on the main facts of the resurrection of Jesus, does not elucidate these questions. He declared that he himself was a witness of the resurrection. But we know that Paul saw Jesus long after he had risen: he saw Jesus on the way to Damascus, in the midst of a great light shining out of heaven. He had not seen Jesus *rise*, but saw him in his risen and ascended state; and that was to Paul the resurrection. The essence of the resurrection of Jesus was his present life in the higher world, and his continued interest in the progress of his gospel below. The true Messiah to be preached through all the world was not an earthly king, but a risen and spiritual Master.

It is an undoubted and undeniable fact that the disciples of Jesus, after his crucifixion, were firmly convinced that he was not dead, but alive. They declared that he had manifested himself to them, and this faith has always continued in the Church to this time. The festival of Easter, the most sacred day in the Christian year, was kept from the beginning, and is a continued testimony to the faith of the Church in the rising of Jesus from death into a higher life.

Another undoubted fact is that this faith was a central and vital power in building up Christianity. When Jesus died on the cross, the faith and hope of the disciples died also. If they had not become somehow firmly convinced that he was still living and could give them power to do his work, how could they ever have regained their courage and their strength? We know as a fact that they did acquire such a power of conviction and purpose that they spread themselves and their doctrine over the whole Roman Empire, and in a few centuries converted it to Christ. They themselves said that their power came from faith in their risen Master.

It is also a fact that there has been from the first in the Christian world a confident persuasion of the reality of the future life quite different from any belief elsewhere. This persuasion of immortality does not come from argument or reasoning. It has been transmitted through the Church from the beginning as an inheritance into which we are all born. We grow up from childhood with this implicit conviction. It has come down from father to son, from mother to daughter, as an unquestioned belief. The arguments of sceptics produce no effect upon us; for the roots of this conviction go down below the region of argument,—it is a part of our life. It is not an opinion to which we assent, but a con-

viction in which we live. In the light of this immortal hope we bid farewell to those we love, who go into the silent land, not as an unknown region, but as a world full of saints and angels, where the dear lost shall come to meet us again.

And now do we ask why faith in the resurrection of Christ is so essential to the progress of man, why it is so central in Christianity? Not because of any theory we may have about the outward facts narrated in the Gospels, nor because of any hypothesis we may cherish as to the nature of the future life. It is because the resurrection of Jesus makes of him a present Saviour and Master. It is not the past event, but that which comes out of it. It is because Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more. It is because he ever liveth to make intercession for us. It is because he is now the Resurrection and the Life, lifting us out of our sins and filling us with God's love.

This is why Paul said, "If Christ be not risen, our preaching is vain, and your faith also is vain." If Christ be not risen, there is no living Christ now to be the source of our faith and hope and love.

But Christ *has* risen. He has ceased to be only a Jewish prophet, a Jewish Messiah: he has become the Saviour of the world. He has brought life and immortality to light. He has filled the earth with the sense of a Divine Presence and a Divine Love. He has taught us all to say "Our Father." He has planted deep in our souls, far below the region of argument, theory, and hypothesis, this faith in immortal being. He has brought heaven near to earth. He does not tell us of a resurrection at the last day, but of a present resurrection, of a life with God now, which takes from us all doubts and fears as regards death and as regards the life hereafter.

The reality of the appearance of Jesus on Easter morning is, always has been, and always will be, the faith of the Christian Church. From this conviction it still draws its life, courage, and hope. This faith fills the soul with a sense of immortality. It abolishes death, and enables us to feel and say as our Christian brother Longfellow has said,—

"There is no death: what seems so is transition."

When I consider the resurrection of Jesus, I do not, therefore, regard it so much as a stupendous miracle, but rather as a revelation of universal law. As he rose, we shall rise. Christ was the first fruits, the first visible revelation of that ascent which is a law of our being. In proportion to the power of faith, conscience, and love in us, we rise to higher life. When Jesus rose, the veil which hides heaven from human eyes was for a moment lifted, and the disciples looked into the higher world. The heavenly Father saw fit to open the heavens, so that one great impression might be made of the spiritual world.

And thus, since Christ is ours and we are his, we have faith that we, too, shall rise. We live surrounded by the spirits of the pure and the perfect, the loving and beloved. We live not in a world of death, but in one of life and immortality. In the resurrection of Jesus we see the triumph of life over death; and thus through all time, when the morning of Easter returns, it will bring with it fresh hope, faith, and courage to the hearts of men. It will console anew the mourner, and be a perpetual spring of comfort and joy.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

CONSIDER THE LILIES.

Who does not love to watch the green things growing? You find me in the valley to-day, and you find me thinking of the lowly Nazarene, when one beautiful morning he walked with his friends through the fields of Judea. His face was uplifted to greet the smile of the Father, and the gentle breezes fanned his brow.

To his own soul he must have said, "So is every one that is born of the Spirit." But to his disciples, "Behold the fowls of the air!"—just as we might say, "Oh, see the birds!" Then he tried to make their dull minds comprehend something of the care of their heavenly Father. Just then he may have crossed a path where lilies grew in rich profusion. He paused, that they might not be trodden upon, and cautioned his followers lest they tread needlessly upon the Beautiful. As they crowded about him in wonderment, he took one in his hand, and held it thoughtfully. A crimson one, it may have been, or a white one, with spots of deep red, like drops of blood.

He held it—our Master——in a spotless

hand, that ere long would be crimsoned with his own life-blood. Then in accents so tender, so divine, he spoke the words that still echo through the centuries. Some one so well remembered as to record them for his disciples in the years to come. They too would be slow of heart, and need to learn the same lesson.

"Consider the lilies, how they grow."

I have been thinking of that sweet story of old, and it has impressed me more deeply because of the lily growing here by my side.

"Flowers preach to us if we will hear." We have been very patient with the plant, knowing its possibilities, and could safely prophesy as to its destiny. About a week ago, something new appeared from out the dark brown earth. It did not spring from the heart of the plant, but outside; that is a way it has, like inspiration, which comes ever from without.

It blossomed a year ago, and we can safely predict its color. It has already taken upon itself the glory that is to be. It is like the "evidence of things not seen." Day by day the stalk will grow and clothe itself with deeper tint, until at last the wonderful secret will become revealed—three blood-red lilies! Once they blossomed at Easter-tide. The world was then in its great agony. The lilies of France were stained with blood, and so were the fields of Flanders, where the poppies grow. "It is well," we said. "Let it take on the color of the Red Cross." It seemed as though an Easter lily had been dipped in the blood of the slain.

Who does not gaze upon an Easter lily with a feeling akin to worship? How wonderful! Like the mystery of birth, like the resurrection of the soul. I love the pure white ones, that have so bravely struggled up from the mire and clay, to bless the sin-stained world with their beauty. I love the red ones also, partly because they are blooming for me, and also for the lesson of life they teach us. Let us watch them grow, till we can say,—

"I lay in dust life's glory, dead.
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be."

—*C. M. Munroe.*

Look up and not down;
Look forward and not back;
Look out and not in;
and
Lend a hand!

—*Edward Everett Hale.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass., Tel. Quincy 1140.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Rev. F. W. Keene is now at 501 Cleveland Street, Raleigh, N.C.

Mrs. Ernest C. Phillips, formerly of Bear Creek, North Carolina, is now at Coleridge, North Carolina.

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Mrs. Henry R. Bowser, 36 Lancaster Street, Cambridge 40, Mass. "Life of William Wordsworth," F. W. H. Myers; "Life of William M. Thackeray," Anthony Trollope; "Life of Henry Fielding," Austin Dobson; "Life of Alexander Pope," Leslie Stephen; "Life of Robert Burns," Principal Shairp; "Life of Geoffrey Chaucer," Adolphus W. Ward; "Audubon, the Naturalist of the New World," Mrs. Horace St. John; "Life of Nelson," Southey; "Selected Poems of Burns"; "The Tempest," Shakespeare; "Lalla Rookh," Thomas Moore; "The Romance and Reality of the Puritan Coast," Edmund H. Garrett; "Practical Method of Learning Spanish," Ybarra; "Hymns and Tunes," twelve pamphlet copies; school-books, and other books for children.

The following books of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle are offered by Mrs. Edward Lanning, 307 Ashmont Street, Dorchester, Mass.: "Greek Architecture and Greek Sculpture," T. Roger Smith: "First Steps in Human Progress," Frederick Starr; "Thinking, Feeling, Doing" (text-book), E. W. Scripture; "Classic Greek Course" (in English),—school series,—William C. Wilkinson; "Initial Studies in American Letters," Henry A. Beers; "Grecian History," James R. Joy; "Industrial Evolution of the United States," Carroll D. Wright; "The Growth of the American Nation," Harry Pratt Judson.

REQUESTS.

1. I have received some books and magazines which I appreciate very much. I should also appreciate some scraps for

quilts. Should be glad of books or any good reading matter for my husband, who has been helpless with rheumatism for five years—can only sit and read. Mrs. O. S. Owen, Wallace, North Carolina, R. D. 1.

2. I have four little children, one boy and three girls. I should like some good reading for my husband, and little boy aged ten; also some bits of ribbon for the little girls. I should be glad of some quilt pieces; any kind would be appreciated. For reference write Rev. W. J. Craddock, Stuart, Virginia, R. F. D. 5. Mrs. H. T. Foley, Dodson, Virginia.

3. I have been married nearly four years; have one little boy two and a half years old, and two tiny babies in heaven. I feel so sad and lonely at times and should appreciate any kind of good books, papers, or picture-books for my little boy; even if they have been read or used, I should appreciate them just the same. We are poor people and are unable to take any papers. Mrs. E. N. Wright, 515 Tenth Avenue, S. E., Roanoke, Virginia.

4. A Geographical Dictionary is asked for by Mrs. Helen M. Warner, R. D. 2, Rome, New York, who writes she has wanted it for some years.

5. Mrs. E. M. Lincoln, East Norton, Mass., and Mrs. Emma M. Backus, 917 Fourth Street, St. Petersburg, Florida, also ask each for a Geographical Dictionary.

6. This is my first letter to *The Cheerful Letter*. I should be glad if some one would send me the "History of Robinson Crusoe." I am a farmer's son and live on a rented farm. There are twelve in our family. We are very poor and would appreciate any kind of reading matter. I should like to correspond with some of the Cheerful Letter friends. Joe Richardson, Box 273, Ansonville, North Carolina.

7. I must write and thank the dear friends through *The Cheerful Letter* for the gifts of books and papers sent me at Christmas. Also for the gifts Edna received from Cheerful Letter friends. Am sure they must believe in helping everywhere. I wonder if any would mind sending me a few scraps to finish up some quilts I have had on hand for some time. I have three silk squares for a silk quilt; also a few worsted squares and one cotton quilt. I should feel very grateful for a few scraps. Mrs. Percy E. Johnson, Pedlar Mills, Virginia.

8. I have four little girls that would like to have some of your books and magazines to read. Anything sent to them will be appreciated. Mrs. Inalee Barlow, Boomer, North Carolina.

9. Mrs. J. P. Hill, Big Island, Virginia, will be glad of *Modern Priscilla*, *Good Housekeeping*, or *Mother's Magazine*.

10. Mattie E. Trevey, Naola, Virginia, a girl of twelve, will be glad of good books for herself and two sisters, Vaughn and Annie.

11. I wish to thank the many friends who have remembered me during the cold winter days, and hope they will continue to think of me with cheer for myself and children. I should be glad to receive *Needlecraft*, *Youth's Companion*, *Life of Christ*, and picture-books for my little ones; if not asking too much I should be very glad to have some one send my aged grandmother birthday cards the 26th of March. She will be ninety-seven years of age, and has very good eyesight and would appreciate large-print reading. Her address is Mrs. S. W. Watts, Snowden, Virginia. Wishing the Club great blessings, I am Mrs. S. M. Trevey, Snowden, Virginia.

12. Mrs. Tom Hancock, 308 High Street, Cheraw, South Carolina, will be glad to receive *Delineator*, *McCall's*, *Pictorial Review*, or any good magazine.

13. *Ladies' Home Journal* and pictures for a baby fourteen months old (that got badly burned) are asked for by Mrs. Thomas W. Hatcher, Buffalo Ridge, Virginia.

14. I wish to thank the Cheerful Letter friends who have sent me reading. I have received very little the past two years. I should like reading for three girls aged eleven, fourteen, and sixteen years; also cards and picture-books for two boys aged three and seven years. Any kind of magazines would be appreciated. I should be glad of letters from any one that will write to me. Mrs. Bennett Lewis, Athens, Texas, Route 1.

15. A Classical Dictionary is asked for by Mrs. Eva M. Beach, Box 285, Cañon City, Colorado, and also by Rev. W. R. Chapman, Lois, Virginia.

16. "The Vicar of Wakefield" is much desired by Mrs. Zilla J. Gann, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina.

17. Mrs. Mary Dillon, Stella, Virginia, writes: "I was sixty-eight years old the 24th of September. My husband has been dead thirty-four years. I have had a very lonely life; but I feel like the dear Lord has blessed me. I live with my daughter. She has a girl fourteen years old. We should be glad to have some reading and patchwork."

18. I wish to thank some kind friend who is sending *The Cheerful Letter* each month to me, and I appreciate it very much. It is quite a while since you all heard from me, and I now have a little baby girl nearly three years old, which makes six children, the oldest eighteen years old. As four are girls, I should dearly love to receive some woolen, calico, or bleached-muslin scraps for quilts. My son would enjoy *The American Boy* after some one is through reading it. Mrs. Etta A. Raynor, Speonk, Long Island, N.Y., Box 31.

19. Mrs. Alice Ward would appreciate scraps for quilts and any good reading *The Cheerful Letter* can send. Her address is Kerr, R. F. D. Box 60, North Carolina.

20. I should like some good magazine (prefer *Good Housekeeping* or *Woman's Home Companion*) or a good novel, please. I should like *Needlecraft*. Then, if any of you do fancy work—French and eyelet or cross-stitch embroidery,—I shall be more than glad to get the scraps of linen you cut off your pieces, the scraps of thread and canvas. That would do me so much good, give me pleasure, and makes the hours pass. I love to crochet and do cross-stitch. Mrs. B. Parler, Saluda, North Carolina.

21. I wish to thank those who have sent me reading in the past and I hope they will still remember me in the future. Mrs. Pearl Darnell, Rochelle, Virginia, would be glad of some good books or magazines. She has just moved to this place and gets very lonely. Please remember her, also. We are having some winter now,—lots and lots of snow and ice; and when a Cheerful Letter friend sends me some good reading it helps to cheer us all up. I hope the friends will continue to think of me and my children. Mrs. Aldia Wyath, Vulcan, Orange County, Virginia.

22. I wish to thank all the Cheerful Letter friends for what they have sent me in the past, and I still wish to be remembered. I should like the book "Slaves of Freedom" by Coningsby Dawson. Cara M. Jones, Tellico Plains, Tennessee.

23. I should be glad of any kind of reading, post-cards, scraps, or magazines that any of the Cheerful Letter friends can send me. I have not been very well here of late. I have six children, four girls and two boys. The smallest children would like post-cards or picture-books. The older ones would like scraps to piece up into quilts. I myself would like scraps or books of any kind, as I get so lonesome at home. Mrs. Eliza Foley, Dodson, Virginia.

24. Miss Mamie Lee Miller, Athens, Tennessee, Route 1, will be glad of light reading.

25. I am an old lady, an invalid and a shut-in, and would like to be remembered by the Cheerful Letter friends with tokens of cheer, to help pass the suffering hours, such as scraps of cotton for making quilts, or anything you choose to send me would be gladly received as I can't read very well. For reference I give Rev. J. B. Robertson, Dodson, Virginia. Miss Bettie Bryant, Dodson, Virginia, care of Mrs. S. L. Turner.

26. Books and magazines will be appreciated by Miss Ellen Hanson, Pleasant View, Virginia, who is very fond of reading and has not received any in a long time.

27. I wish to thank all those who have been so kind to me during the past year. I should like to write to each one and thank them, but some of the magazines had no name on them. I hope the friends will continue to think of me and my children. I have one daughter, who has had appendicitis. Anything will be appreciated sent to us to pass the lonely hours. Mrs. Sallie McLendon, Polkton, North Carolina, Route 2, Box 100.

28. Mrs. Addie Staton, Ansonville, North Carolina, Route 1, will be grateful for pictures for her children, aged five and three; and magazines for her husband, who is unable to work, having met with a severe accident.

29. Mrs J. W. Curlee, Polkton, Route 3, Box 16, North Carolina, would like books for children, a dictionary, and any reading for older people.

30. Lena Pendleton, Elamsville, Virginia, a girl of fifteen, would like suitable reading.

31. I am poor and a great sufferer from rheumatism; live in the country and am confined at home all my time, and do get so lonely. I should appreciate books or reading matter of any kind, and pieces for my quilts. Mrs. Jennie Agee, Spencer, Virginia, Route 1, Box 35.

32. Emma M. Backus, 917 Fourth Street, North, St. Petersburg, Florida, would be glad to receive "On the Threshold of the Unseen," Sir William T. Barrett; "Experiments in Psychical Science," W. J. Crawford; "The Reality of Psychic Phenomena," W. J. Crawford; or any books or magazines on Psychical Research or New Thought. She will return them if desired. She would like to correspond with some one interested in these subjects.

33. Mrs. Florence T. Walker, E, 307 Dalton Avenue, Spokane, Washington, five miles from a library, asks for "Pride and Prejudice," "Jungle Book," "Ivanhoe," "Edge of the Desert," and any reading for her mother, who is eighty-three and a lover of stories.

34. I am asking you to send me Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." I want it for my little boy. It is one of the classics that he has to read in his school. I should like to have it in coarse print, as his eyes are very weak. I should be glad if you would send me the *Modern Priscilla* or any other good magazine. I should also be glad to receive "Robinson Crusoe" and "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch." Mrs. C. E. Phillips, Pleasant View, Virginia.

35. A cook-book is asked for by Mrs. Joe Dodd, and books and magazines by Mr. Dewey Dodd, Sandidges, Virginia, Route 2.

36. Mrs. Mary Anderson Bosch, Mocksville, North Carolina, Route 5, Box 25, will be glad to receive "Daily Evening Prayer."

37. I should like to get some of the Waverley Novels, including "Peveril of the Peak," "Red Gauntlet," "Betrothed," and "Highland Widow," and any books and magazines. We have nine in the family. Janie Nolen, Hillsdale, Virginia.

38. Any of Shakespeare's works will be gratefully received by Mrs. Cora A. Hoskinson, Three Rivers, Michigan, 314 E. Wheeler St. Also by Mrs. Mary D. Tannehill, 5 Liberty Street, Charleston, South Carolina.

39. Please send me story-books and good reading of any kind, as I am very lonely and like to read to pass off the hours. Miss Dora White, Greensboro, North Carolina, Route 3.

40. Will some one please send the little folks some *Youth's Companions?* I should like so much to have copies of *Needlecraft* or *Modern Priscilla.* Should be very thankful for old numbers. Any kind of good cheerful reading matter would be appreciated by us and passed on to others. Mrs. Ada V. Wann, Waxahachie, Texas, Route A.

AT REST.

Mrs. E. M. Harris, for sixteen years a faithful member of the Arlington, Mass., Committee, died at her home in February from influenza at the age of eighty-two.

Mrs. E. A. Clark of Levant, Maine, one of our most generous helpers, passed away January eighteenth. A member of long standing, enjoying the cheer sent her and passing it on to others. She will be greatly missed.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

REFUGE FROM MONOTONY AND DRUDGERY.

We are all victims of monotony. Drudgery at work-bench; toil at machine; days at office desk with glorious skies of blue and gold outside; the endless round of chores; everlasting household tasks,—meals, dishes to wash, children to dress and scrub,—whoever works for a living can define "monotony."

The commonest attempt to escape from life's monotony is by external excitements,—theatres, parties, movies, dances, ball games,—anything to forget our work, really to forget ourselves. These amusements have their places, but the relief they afford is only temporary. Besides, what of the multitudes who cannot get even these respites, because they are too busy, or too tired, or too poor, or live too far away?

There is another refuge. It is in the use of "margins."

Ask a highly educated man who leads a busy life how he ever found time to do all his reading and studying and thinking, and you always get the same story. ("Highly educated" does not necessarily mean college educated, for people who are really educated get it themselves, no matter what their schooling.) The story they all tell is this: they used their "margins."

Our days are full of waste minutes which grow into waste hours. You find that these well-educated people always carried a book in their pockets; that they read science or law or literature on street-cars or during ten-minute waits for railroad trains. A young Gloucester fisherman, who learned trigonometry braced in his bunk on days too blowy to fish, when his mates were playing poker, eight years later is in command of a ten-thousand-ton freighter. Mme. Schumann-Heink learned her early operatic parts while washing dishes, with the score propped up over her kitchen sink. She was a poor widow with a bevy of little children, but she had grit and used her margins.

No matter how busy we all are, we all have "margins." In using these lies our refuge from monotony.

One can acquire skill with tools to make useful and beautiful things; one can master a foreign language and have the satisfaction of reading great works in the original tongue; one can master a musical instrument (tough though it may be on family and neighbor); one can cultivate the art of speech, of free-hand drawing, of fluent writing. A few minutes a day over a period of years can suffice to make industrious people marvels of proficiency; and even if they should not, there is the satisfaction of being able to do something moderately well.

Then there is always reading. Good books are cheap. For shut-ins, there are fascinating volumes of travel or adventure; for those forced to spend their lives among uncongenial people, there are biographies of good men and great, who can become to us much more intimate friends than plenty of our flesh-and-blood acquaintances.

For those who like to live in a world of the imagination, there are the poets who weave our own dreams and utter our own thoughts more vividly than we can ourselves. For inquisitive minds which hunger to know how and why things happen in field and sky, there is science: books about plants and animals and stars and geology—which teaches us to read the history of thousands of years in a pasture or a gravel bank. And for those who wonder what in the world is going to happen next, there is a chance to peer into the future by gazing backward at it as it is mirrored in the past—in history.

In this world university of "margin" time there is no rich and no poor, no learned and no ignorant, no young and no old. The young farmer, in order to train his memory to do its work, learning pages of poetry by heart as he chops in his woodlot; the housewife snatching ten minutes to read between putting the babies to bed and serving supper; the mother determined not to be outgrown by her children and not too proud to study their school and college text-books until, in the end, she is better educated than they are, precisely because she is more in earnest,—all these belong to the same fraternity, that fraternity of the hungry mind and the strong purpose which is the only real intellectual aristocracy.

Such study is more than a refuge from boredom. It is a refuge from misfortune. If our universe is contained in a single house or in two or three lives, a fire or a death can shatter it. The larger our world, the harder it is to smash. Personal misfortune comes; we suffer; but our lives are not desolated. Life is so interesting that we cannot lie down and die just yet.

Then the cultivation of such taste teaches us to enjoy life as we go along, instead of always looking forward to some future day when we shall begin to enjoy.

The last and best thing which can be done with these harvests garnered from the fence-corners of our margin time is to put the serenity and elevation of thought, which they bring, into the daily practice of our lives. That is the final test of whether they are really ours.—*"Uncle Dudley," in the Boston Globe.*

The common problem—yours, mine, every one's,
Is not to fancy what were fair in life,
Provided it could be,—but finding first
What may be; then find how to make it fair,
Up to our means,—a very different thing.

—*Robert Browning.*

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

JEROME, THE HERMIT SCHOLAR.

Many hundred years ago, a country boy in a land at the east of the Adriatic Sea was eager to be learning more than he could learn at home. Young Jerome had heard great tales of Rome and of the wise teachers there. In some way or other he managed to make the journey to Rome. Most likely he crossed the blue Adriatic in a small sailing-vessel, landing in Southern Italy. Then he followed a long paved highway leading across Italy to what was then the greatest city in the whole world.

It was the beginning of gloriously busy and happy years. Rome was like any large centre of life to-day in having among its citizens some people who cared only for politics, some who cared only for sports and amusements, some whose chief thought was for fashionable clothes and expensive things to eat. But Jerome found friends whose tastes were like his own, and gave his whole soul to study. It was his chief delight to make acquaintance with some book of profound thoughts or beautiful fancies or shrewd judgments,—and read and read and read!

Some of the books were written in the Latin language, some in Greek. They were literally "written," for Jerome's student days were more than a thousand years before the invention of printing. Every volume that he pored over so eagerly had been copied by somebody with pen-and-ink from some still earlier copy.

At that time (it was in the latter half of the fourth century), it was quite allowable in Rome to be a Christian if one chose; he was not in danger of being treated as a criminal; but most people considered Christians a rather foolish lot of fanatics. The average Roman did not care to bother his head with thoughts of a God Who made sharp and troublesome distinctions between right and wrong. Yet here and there in Rome there were followers of Christ, some rich, some poor, who felt sure they knew of things much better worth having than bodily comforts.

In the homes of those "different" Romans, and at their gatherings for worship, Jerome met monks from Egypt and Syria,—men who had deliberately given up the customary ways of living, and had gone out into distant lonely retreats where (so they thought) there would be nothing to distract their attention from prayer and holy meditation. Some such hermits had, indeed, learned to have quite wonderful insight and understanding in spiritual matters; other men, who heard about them, were always making journeys to consult them about problems of duty and to ask for advice. The monks whom Jerome met in Rome had gone there to stay for a limited time, teaching and preaching.

Jerome himself became more and more attracted by the idea of a life devoted wholly to the thought of the Kingdom of Heaven and the Person of Jesus Christ. He forsook the fascinating books that had once satisfied his highest ambition. He went away to a lonely place in Syria, to train himself in the duties of a monk. There he and his fellow-disciples studied for hours every day the sacred Scriptures and the writings of certain famous old Christian teachers.

They had no near neighbors other than the birds and wild beasts. Ancient stories of Jerome's life say that one day a lion came to the home of the brethren to show his paw which had been badly wounded. Most of the brothers prudently retired to the little cells where they slept; only Jerome had the courage to stay and give "first aid." And the story goes on to declare that ever afterward the lion used to follow Jerome about, or lie at his feet while he studied and prayed.

Several years were spent in that Syrian wilderness; then Jerome paid another visit to Rome, this time as a teacher of religion. He had a wonderful influence over some of the most rich and aristocratic people of the great city. Lovely ladies, instead of giving all their thought to personal luxuries and silly extravagance, began to help the poor and the sick, whose existence had never been quite real to them before. One noble lady gave her private fortune to build a hospital,—a most extraordinary use of good money that seemed to her haughty neighbors! Another sent money to Palestine and built two convents at Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus; one was made a home for Christian women who wished to give all their time to prayer and service to the needy. Another was given to Jerome as a home for himself and men of the same ideals.

Nearly all the rest of his days Jerome spent either in the Bethlehem convent or at Rome. His fame as a man of vast theological learning had spread over the civilized world; he had endless letters to write and read,—letters dealing usually with puzzling theological problems about

which very little is said in our twentieth century. In those days nobody quite realized the inconsistency of getting angry over a religious discussion, and Jerome, good and fine as he was, often wrote vigorously abusive things about other scholars who disagreed with him! Poor Jerome had ruined his digestion and indeed wrecked his general health by going without needed food and rest, and the ill-treated body in turn injured his disposition.

But Jerome has for centuries been reckoned as one of the great Saints of the Christian Church. His bad tempers are forgiven and his services remembered. And one of his chief services was something for which every one of us is his debtor.

Fifteen years of the old Saint's life were given to the task of translating the whole Bible from the original Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament into Latin. As Latin was then commonly spoken and read in all the lands around the Mediterranean Sea, Jerome thus brought the whole Bible into such form that all educated people might read it for themselves. Such a translation had indeed been made before Jerome's time, but not very correctly. Jerome's Latin version is still read to-day by millions of our fellow Christians. And every translation into English made since Jerome's time, including the Bibles we ourselves are reading in 1920, has made more or less use of Jerome's work. It is partly thanks to him that we ourselves have had a chance to know by heart *The Lord is my shepherd and Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

BOBBIE YANK.

The bird-books call him the white-breasted nuthatch, but I call him Bobbie Yank. The reason for my familiarity is that we have been on speaking terms for over a year. It began on Thanksgiving Day, 1917, over a piece of suet tied to the balcony post, and has continued, by means of little devices and encouragements like sunflower seeds and nut-meats, until now we are old friends.

Last July, as I was giving the garden a good watering after a very hot day, I heard a familiar *yank* close to my ear, and, turning, saw my friend, his wife and five children, on the trunk of a young black walnut at the garden's edge, only a pace from where I stood. If the most distinguished man in the world had made a pilgrimage with his family to see me, I couldn't have felt more "set up." There were the proud, sleek parents and their five overgrown, fluffy youngsters, a study in blue-gray. Their father's look told volumes: "Well, here they are! And a fine-looking lot, if I do say so. I tell you, a family like that represents work. Many's the time I've gone to bed hungry after a hard day carrying grubs to those children; and the worst of it is—you positively *couldn't* fill them!"

Months intervened before I next saw Bobbie. Upon my first glimpse of him I put some nut-meats on the upper balcony and just inside my bedroom window, and waited. The balcony meats made a prompt disappearance, and then, sure enough, in he came,—very cautiously at first—hopping over the window-sill with his individual zigzag hop, and changing his *yank yank* as he entered into a subdued colloquial tone which Mr. Chapman has well described as his "conversational twitter." Later on, when nuts appeared not only on the floor but on the furniture and in unexpected corners, Bobbie made his entrance by flying from the balcony rail to the corner of the dressing-table, which stands between two long French windows; and there he took a survey in order to decide which place gave the best promise.

One sunny day I sat in the open window with a nut-meat on the toe of my boot,—foot extended. He came hopping in very cautiously, looking at me with head on one side, his bright eyes questioning my face, plainly saying: "Will you keep still? Really, will you?" Then he grasped the nut and made off with it.

And now I come to an interesting fact about Bobbie. I have in my room the plaster cast of a Barye lioness, standing out rather large and white against a mahogany bookcase. Bob has taken nuts from every piece of furniture and every object in the room *except that lioness.* He has never touched her. I thought I would force the issue by putting a very large nut-meat in her jaw, and not a fragment anywhere else in the room. That day I heard the worst clatter—a perfect din—out on the maple. It was like the scolding note of the robin at his most excited moment, combined with the blatant quality of the flicker. I under-

stood something to this effect: "I am not going to fly into the jaws of death! My mother told me at a tender age to recognize that combination of lines as a cat,—than which a bird has no worse enemy!"

Do you wonder that my window stands open in all kinds of weather, and that I cast aside such frills as curtains that blow and shades that flap, in order to receive every winter such a delightful guest?—*Katrine Blackinton, in Bird Lore.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 1925 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge 40, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication) and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

TWISTED POETS.

1. Rivelo Ledenwl Losemh.
2. Nhrey Wsohtodwa Noowgllefl.
3. Njoh Neelergfa Hirttiew.
4. Masje Twmhoicb Ileyr.
5. Nhoj Tinlmo.
6. Hojn Ybloe Riolley.
7. Rehcsal Kdcsein.
8. Faldre Ynntsoen.
9. Ilwl Letroan.
10. Liwlami Psskeeraah.

II.

TRANSPOSITIONS.

Transpose the following sentences and make (1) a hater of mankind; (2) a sudden change of government; (3) a house of correction; (4) display.

1. Spare him not.
2. To love ruin.
3. Nay, I repent it.
4. O, 'tis not neat.

III.

CHESS-BOARD PUZZLE.

I D O R C L
N W W O E L
D O L R A W
C L C L A A
E S O I T T
T R O O L F

Move in any direction including diagonally. Each letter is used once. The words found will be parts of the house.

IV.

CHARADE.

My first is a noble animal.
My second is lord of creation.
My third is a vessel.
My whole is an art.

V.

CONUNDRUMS.

1. Why do the Germans spell culture with a "K"?
2. What is the difference between a cat's feet and a common?
3. Of what trade are all the Presidents?

The above puzzles are taken from the *Beacon*, to which the Editor makes due acknowledgment.

Answer to puzzle in the February number.

1. Love affair in a Garden: 1. Lily. 2. Sweet William. 3. Snowball. 4. Jonquil. 5. Money. 6. Marigold. 7. Aster. 8. Heart'sease. 9. Poppy. 10. Elder. 11. Rose. 12. Morning-glory. 13. Jack-in-the-Pulpit. 14. Pansy. 15. Violet. 16. Bridal Wreath. 17. Lady's-slippers. 18. Bachelor's Buttons. 19. Phlox. 20. Magnolia. 21. Four-o'clock. 22. Trumpet Vine. 23. Balsam. 24. Black-eyed Susan. 25. Forget-me-not. 26. A Yellow Rose. 27. Tulips. 28. Goldenrod. 29. Everlasting.

Answers to puzzles in the March number.

I. ADDITION PUZZLE: The letter "D." Daddy dodged Dan's dog Dandy.

II. JUMBLED NAMES: Bella, Mattie, Nettie, Penelope, Lottie, Barbara, Caroline, Beatrice, Amy, Hattie, Dorothea.

III. DIAMOND:
M
A Y E
M Y R R H
E R A
H

IV. TWISTED FISH: 1. Pickerel. 2. Trout. 3. Hornpout. 4. Minnow. 5. Salmon. 6. Whale. 7. Perch.

V. ARRANGING THE DIGITS:

2	9	4
7	5	3
6	1	8

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

Chairman of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

Secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Mrs. Francis Hastings, Kendal Green, Mass.

Editor of The Cheerful Letter, Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 5 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of *The Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

In sending subscriptions for *The Cheerful Letter*, address The Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Subscriptions, 50 cents a year.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

OFFERS.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

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THE ATTENTION OF READERS IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

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The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Miss Helen L. Wells, 269 Franklin Street, Newton, Mass.

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The Home Study Committee of the Cheerful Letter Exchange is planning for more efficient work.

Let it be understood that there are no special courses; the instruction is given by volunteers.

Our aim is to help in subjects in which one is deficient; to help one fit himself for a higher grade of work.

We have books used in the schools here, which can be used for supplementary work in the schoolroom or in the home.

Make all applications to the Home Study Work, Mrs. Elmer E. Hudson, 5 Alveston Street, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

MUSIC.

The music sent out by this department has in the past given much pleasure; and, now that there is more and more interest in "community singing" the calls for help may naturally be expected to be greater.

Offers and requests should be sent to Mrs. Thomas Lacey, 35 East 30th Street, New York City, or to All Souls Church, Fourth Avenue and 20th Street, New York City.